Unused Airstrips in Tamil Nadu

2589. SHRI T.T.V. DHINAKARAN: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that airports/airstrips of Tuticorin, Neyvelli and Vellore in Tamil Nadu are in disuse;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor;

(c) whether Government have received any proposal from private airlines for using these airports/airstrips; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) and (b) No, Sir. The airports at Tuticorin and Vellore belong to Airports Authority of India (AAI). Scheduled airlines are operating through Tuticorin airport and general aviation activities take place at Vellore airport. The airstrip at Neyvelli is a private airstrip which belongs to Neyvelli Lignite Corporation (NLC).

(c) and (d) Do not arise in view of the answer at (a) and (b) above.

Performance of Indian

2590. DR. NARAYAN SINGH MANAKLAO: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that due to a number of low cost private airlines, the national carrier Indian has suffered financially and otherwise;

(b) if so, the details of losses thereof arising from low revenue income, grounding of aircraft, occupancy of bay areas and poaching of pilots;

(c) the details of future road map for the Indian being chalked out *vis-a-vis* the private airlines;

(d) whether the Indian will offload the burden of running in the uneconomic routes to private airlines; and

(e) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Do not arise.

(c) Marketing initiatives/new promotional schemes like 'i-mint', 'Spot Fares', 'Double Dollar Discount', 'Executive Class Return Fare' 'Class Apart

Offer', 'IA - Master Card Joint Promotion', 'Indian Family Fares', 'Super Saver Utsav Plus', bookings through IDBI Bank ATM etc. have been launched. Measures like fleet augmentation/renewal, in-flight initiatives, service upgrades on ground, improvements in cabin ambience, rebranding corporate identity etc. have been undertaken to cater to the needs of the customers.

(d) and (e) As per Route Dispersal Guidelines laid down by the Government, all operators are required to deploy in Category-II routes, at least 10% of the capacity deployed by them on routes in Category-I. The operator is also required to deploy in Category-III, at least 50% of the capacity deployed on routes in Category-I, Category-II and IIA routes are considered to be non-profitable/uneconomical routes.

All scheduled operators who operate on Category-I routes operate on Category-II and IIA routes to meet the requirements of Routes Dispersal Guidelines.

Expansion of Chennai Airport

2591. SHRI SU. THIRUNAVUKKARASAR: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) the stage of progress of the expansion plan of Chennai international airport; and

(b) whether there is any objection/resistance by the local people from whom land for expansion is to be acquired?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) Apart from on-going works of extension and modification of International Terminal, expansion of administrative building, construction of 5 nos. night parking bays and construction of 10 nos. remote parking bays and taxi - link, there are plans - for development of a new International Terminal Building, a parallel runway, other infrastructure etc., for which State Government has been requested to acquire 583 hectare of land.

(b) State Government of Tamil Nadu initiated action to acquire the required land. Some affected residents have filed a Writ Petition against the land acquisition proceedings in the High Court of Madras and matter is presently subjudice.